

Message Text

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44

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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R 121356Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7930

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY MEXICO CITY

USMISSION USUN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, XF,IS

SUBJ: PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA'S VISIT TO ISRAEL

1. SUMMARY. PRESIDENT LUIS ECHEVERRIA'S 4 DAY WHIRLWIND VISIT TO ISRAEL AUGUST 7-10, WHILE MARKED BY GREAT CEREMONIAL FANFARE AND ALL-OUT TOP LEVEL ATTENTION, WAS CONSIDERABLY LESS THAN MAJOR HISTORIC EVENT. COMING IN WAKE OF HIS WIDELY PUBLICIZED MEETING WITH ARAFAT AND HIS ANTI-ISRAELI DECLARATIONS IN ARAB CAPITALS, ISRAELIS HAD BEEN SOMEWHAT WORRIED ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF SHARP POLITICAL CONFRONTATION. IN RETROSPECT, ISRAELIS REGARD VISIT AS MODEST SUCCESS, PRIVATELY SATISFIED THAT ECHEVERRIA DID NOT CONFRONT THEM DIRECTLY ON PALESTINIAN AND TERRITORIAL ISSUES AND PUBLICLY PLEASED BY HIS DISPATCH OF FOREIGN MINISTER RABASA TO CAIRO TO PROMOTE IDEA OF DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. ATMOSPHERE OF TENSION PREVAILED DURING PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA'S 4-DAY ROAD SHOW IN ISRAEL. WIDE PUBLICITY
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HAD BEEN GIVEN HERE TO HIS MEETING WITH ARAFAT AND HIS CALLS FOR ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL TO 1967 BORDERS AND CREATION OF PALESTINIAN STATE. THERE WAS SCARCELY-VEILED CONCERN THAT ECHEVERRIA MIGHT REPEAT THESE STATEMENTS HERE,

LEADING TO EMBARRASSING AND POTENTIALLY DAMAGING PUBLIC CONFRONTATION. HE REFRAINED HOWEVER FROM REPEATING THEM PUBLICLY AND ATMOSPHERE OF RELIEVED CORDIALITY PREVAILED.

3. HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDED TOURS BY PRESIDENT AND HIS ENTOURAGE OF 180 TO GOLAN HEIGHTS, HOLY SITES, KIBBUTZIM, WEIZMAN INSTITUTE, TOPPED OFF BY PRESENTATION OF HONORARY DOCTORATE AT TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY. ECHEVERRIA WAS FETED AT STATE DINNER HOSTED BY PRIME MINISTER, GIVEN RECEPTION BY PRESIDENT KATZIR, AND MET WITH SENIOR ISRAELI LEADERS AS WELL AS WITH MRS. MEIR AND JERUSALEM MAYOR KOLLEK.

4. WHILE VISIT WAS ANNOUNCED AS FACT FINDING MISSION, IT TURNED OUT TO BE EMINENTLY POLITICAL EVENT, -- ALTHOUGH ITS RESULTS APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN MINIMAL. IN ADDITION TO REITERATING MEXICAN SUPPORT FOR RES 242 AND 238 AND 238 AND OPPOSITION TO ISRAELI SUSPENSION FROM UNGA, MOST NOTABLE ASPECT OF VISIT FROM ISRAELI PERSPECTIVE WAS ON-SPOT DECISION BY ECHEVERRIA TO DISPATCH FOREIGN MINISTER RABASA AUGUST 8 TO CAIRO IN ATTEMPT TO ARRANGE MEETING BETWEEN SADAT AND RABIN. MEXICAN INITIATIVE APPARENTLY CAME ABOUT AS RESULT OF RABIN'S REITERATION OF LONG-STANDING ISRAELI INTEREST IN FACE TO FACE MEETINGS WITH ARAB LEADERS. ECHEVERRIA SAID THAT RABASA TRIP WAS "EFFORT TO TAKE STEP FORWARD IN NEGOTIATIONS". (AUGUST 12 YEDIOT AHARONOT HEADLINE ANNOUNCED THAT SADAT HAD REJECTED MEXICAN INITIATIVE.)

5. CAREFULLY-WORDED JOINT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT END OF VISIT, AFTER NOTING ATMOSPHERE OF "FRANKNESS AND SINCERE CORDIALITY", REAFFIRMED MEXICAN SUPPORT FOR FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF UNSC RESOLUTIONS 242 AND 338. IT ALSO REFERRED TO SUPPORT FOR "UNIVERSALITY OF THE UN", INTERPRETED HERE AS REJECTION BY MEXICO OF ANY INITIATIVE TO EXPEL OR SUSPEND ISRAEL FROM UN, AND "REITERATED THE FIRM SUPPORT THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF MEXICO GIVES TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NUCLEAR WEAPON FREE ZONE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN THE MIDDLE EAST". FINALLY, IT TOOK NOTE OF ONGOING BILATERAL INITIATIVES IN COMMERCIAL, TECHNOLOGIC AND EDUCATIONAL AREAS.

6. PRESS GAVE MASSIVE COVERAGE TO CEREMONIAL ASPECTS OF VISIT. EDITORIALS STRESSED CORDIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN MEXICO AND ISRAEL DESPITE POLITICAL DIFFERENCES. JERUSALEM POST FOR INSTANCE NOTED THAT VISIT HAD DEMONSTRATED INCREASING DIFFICULTY FOR ISRAEL TO PERSUADE ITS FRIENDS, INCLUDING MEXICAN PRESIDENT, OF DANGERS FROM ISRAELI SECURITY IN WITHDRAWALS. HEBREW LANGUAGE PRESS STRESSED IMPORTANCE FOR ISRAEL TO DEVELOP AT

LEAST UNDERSTANDING IF NOT COMPLETE SUPPORT FOR ITS
CASE IN LATIN AMERICA, ALTHOUGH VIEWS WERE DIVIDED
AS TO WHETHER VISIT ATTAINED THIS OBJECTIVE. PRESS
ALSO WAS NOT OBLIVIOUS TO ECHEVERRIA'S APPARENT, IF
NOT EXPRESSED, INTEREST IN BEING CONSIDERED A POSSIBLE
SUCCESSOR TO SYG WALDHEIM.

7. WE WILL BE DISCUSSING VISIT IN NEXT FEW DAYS WITH
MFA OFFICIALS WHO AT THIS POINT ARE RECOVERING FROM
THEIR MARATHON EXERTIONS. FROM OUR VANTAGE POINT,
ISRAELIS SEEMED GLAD TO HAVE ECHEVERRIA COME, BUT
THEY WERE JUST AS HAPPY TO SEE HIM LEAVE.
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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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